



## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AND ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT TO THE MEA**

*Learning Results* legislation clearly articulates that all students will be included in state assessment at the fourth grade, eighth grade, and eleventh grade levels. The Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) has been revised to measure the standards detailed in Maine's *Learning Results*. All students in Maine will participate in the state level assessment, the MEA, through one or a combination of three avenues. Students will take the assessment through standard administration, through administration with accommodations, and/or through alternate assessment. Legal requirements for students identified for federally funded programs have been taken into account in the development of this document.

### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS**

The policies and procedures for accommodations are designed so that all students with unique learning needs have a fair opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do on the MEA. An accommodation is a change in the way an assessment is given or taken that does not alter what is being measured.

#### **TEST ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES**

Students who may be considered for accommodations include, but are not limited to, those who are ill or incapacitated in some way, who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP), who have an identified disability under IDEA-97, who are identified as having disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or who are unable to work independently in any of the subjects assessed.

All students being considered for accommodations on the MEA must have their individual situations reviewed by a team prior to the time of assessment. This team should include at least one of the student's teachers, the building principal, related services personnel, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and, whenever possible, the student. If it is not possible for the parent and student to attend the meeting, they should be consulted regarding the committee's recommendations for accommodations prior to the time of the assessment.

For a student who has an Individual Educational Program (IEP), schools are required to address needed accommodations at a Pupil Evaluation Team (PET) meeting. Membership for this meeting is prescribed in Maine Special Education Regulations, Chapter 101, part 8, November 1, 1999.

Recommended accommodations should be consistent with accommodations already being employed in the student's instructional program. Any accommodations recommended for a student will be reflected in a statement in the cumulative folder of the student (in the IEP for a student with an identified disability under IDEA-97). See the section on documentation for a suggested format.

#### **DOCUMENTATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS**

Information about the accommodations provided for students and the reasons for providing these accommodations should be documented by marking the appropriate information on the second page of the students' response booklets. This information is to be coded in by staff—not students—**after** testing is completed. The test coordinator's and test administrator's manuals provide directions on coding in the information related to

accommodations. Every student in the district must be accounted for by completion of the first two pages of a MEA Student Response Booklet.

As stated earlier, any accommodations made for a student and the reasons for these choices must also be reflected in a statement in the cumulative folder of the student (in the IEP for a student with an identified disability). The following is a suggested statement.

This student will participate in the \_\_\_\_ th grade level MEA with the following accommodations:

Section	Reason for Accommodation	Accommodation Code*
ELA—Writing	_____	_____
ELA—Reading	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Science and Technology	_____	_____

### **REPORTING STUDENTS' SCORES**

All students will be included in the school's accountability system. Scores of all students who take all sessions of a content area of the MEA are included in the school's aggregate scores for the content area taken.

\* Refer to the last page of this document for the allowable accommodation codes A-F.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT**

The very few students who will require an alternate assessment are the students for whom accommodations would be so significant that they would compromise the validity of the MEA tests. Every effort must be made to assess students through standard administration or through administration with accommodations. This is true not only for the entire MEA, but also for the content areas within the MEA. (Refer to the previous section of this document for further guidance on accommodations.)

Maine's alternate assessment, the Personalized Alternate Assessment Portfolio (PAAP), assesses the same content areas as the MEA: English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology. Students must be assessed in all three content areas, but may participate through any combination of administrative avenues.

### **PERSONALIZED ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO (PAAP) PROCEDURES**

Students who may be considered for alternate assessment include, but are not limited to, those who are Limited English Proficient, who have an identified significant or profound disability under IDEA-97, or who are identified as having disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

All students being considered for the PAAP must have their individual situations reviewed by a team prior to the time of assessment, allowing sufficient time for appropriate administration of the PAAP. This team should include at least one of the student's teachers, the building principal, related services personnel, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and, whenever possible, the student. If it is not possible for the parent and student to attend the meeting, they should be consulted regarding the committee's recommendations. The PAAP will require the accumulation of evidence to be gathered during the school year and submitted in the spring of grades 4, 8, and 11. Teams are encouraged to meet during the year prior to the MEA administration year, allowing for the gathering of student work during most of the following school year.

For a student who has an Individual Educational Program (IEP), schools are required to address the need for the alternate assessment at a Pupil Evaluation Team (PET) meeting. Membership for this meeting is prescribed in Maine Special Education Regulations, Chapter 101, November 1, 1999.

The recommendation for a student to take a PAAP will be reflected in a statement in the cumulative folder of the student (in the IEP for a student with an identified disability). See the section on documentation for a suggested format.

## DOCUMENTATION OF ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

Information about the participation of students in PAAP and the reasons for this assessment option should be documented by marking the appropriate information on the second page of the students' response booklets. This information is to be coded in by staff, not students. The test coordinator's and test administrator's manuals provide directions on coding in the information related to alternate assessments. Every student in the district must be accounted for by completion of the first two pages of a response booklet.

As stated earlier, the PAAP provided to a student and the reasons for this option must also be reflected in a statement in the cumulative folder of the student (in the IEP for a student with an identified disability under IDEA-97). The following is a suggested statement.

This student will participate in an alternate assessment to the \_\_\_\_ th grade level MEA:

Section	Reason for Alternate Assessment (PAAP) Example(s)	Student Designation: LEP, 504, IEP*
ELA— Writing	_____	_____
ELA— Reading	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Science and Technology	_____	_____

Note: Guidance on PAAP development, content, and scoring is available through a series of regional workshops. For details on these events, as well as additional information on the Alternate Assessment component of the Maine Comprehensive Assessment System, please refer to the DOE web site at [www.mecas.org/paap](http://www.mecas.org/paap).

\*Identify specific disability from Chapter 101, part 3.

## ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SCORING AND REPORTING OF STUDENT SCORES

The assessment contractor must receive all PAAPs by April 8, 2005. PAAPs received after that date will not be scored and the students for whom a late PAAP is submitted will be counted as non-participants in the MEA. All student scores, regardless of the avenue of participation (standard administration, administration with accommodations, or alternate assessment) will be included in the Comprehensive Assessment System reporting system.

**Note:** Refer to the last page of this document for the allowable alternate assessment content areas.

## CODING FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

### A. Scheduling Accommodations

Tests were administered

- A.1. at a time of day or a day of the week most beneficial to the student.
- A.2. in appropriate blocks of time for individual student needs, followed by rest breaks.
- A.3. with time extended beyond the regular test administration allotments until, in the administrator's judgment, the student could no longer sustain the activity.
- A.4. with testing over several days (some extended time)
- A.5. using flexibility in the order in which content area tests are given.

### B. Setting Accommodations

Tests were administered

- B.1. individually.
- B.2. in a small group.
- B.3. with student use of adaptive or special furniture, such as a carrel.
- B.4. in an alternative setting.
- B.5. at the student's home, by school personnel.
- B.6. preferential seating, such as student seated in front of the classroom.
- B.7. with the teacher facing the student.
- B.8. by school personnel known to the student other than the student's regular teacher (e.g., LEP, Title 1, Compensatory Education, Special Education).
- B.9. with special lighting/acoustics
- B.10. in an environment with minimal distractions
- B.11. with opportunity for student to move, stand, and/or pace during assessment

### C. Equipment Accommodations

Tests were administered

- C.1. with the student using magnifying equipment.
- C.2. with the student wearing noise buffers.
- C.3. using a template.
- C.4. with the student using amplification equipment (e.g., a hearing aid or auditory trainer).
- C.5. with the student using a typewriter or word processor.
- C.6. with student use of arithmetic tables during the calculator-allowed sessions of the mathematics section only).
- C.7. using voice-actuated technology.

- C.8. using other assistive technology, including augmentative/alternative communication system.
- C.9. using a bilingual dictionary.
- C.10. with student use of place markers to maintain place.

### D. Recording Accommodations

- D.1. The student's answers were dictated to and recorded by the test administrator or a recording device  
*NOTE: Oral dictation of writing samples is NOT an approved accommodation.*
- D.2. The student wrote answers by computer, machine or on large-spaced paper (grades 4 and 11 only).

### E. Modality Accommodations

- E.1. Tests were administered in large print.
- E.2. Tests were administered in Braille.
- E.3. Tests were read to the student by the test administrator (with the exception of the reading passages).
- E.4. Tests were interpreted for the deaf or hearing-impaired student (with the exception of the reading passages).
- E.5. An administrator gave test directions with verification that the student understood them.
- E.6. Tests and/or student responses were translated word for word into native language for an LEP student by local personnel. (NOTE: Translation of the following is NOT allowed: the ELA-reading sessions, and student responses to the ELA-writing and ELA-reading sessions. Student responses to the mathematics and science & technology sessions may be translated into English. All student responses sent for scoring must be in English.)
- E.7. Tests were read in "Sheltered English" content for an LEP student in a manner that does not compromise test integrity.
- E.8. Mathematics tests were administered in sheltered English to eligible LEP Students

### F. Other Accommodations

- F.1. Other (must be approved by the Department of Education in advance)\*
- F.2. Other – related to Grade 8 MEA Online Assessment (must be approved by the Department of Education in advance)\*

## ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

*Students will be provided with an alternate assessment in the following content areas if they cannot take the MEA either through standard administration or administration with accommodations:*

*English Language Arts-Writing*

*Mathematics*

*English Language Arts- Reading*

*Science and Technology*

\*For further information contact: Horace (Brud) Maxcy, Coordinator, Maine Educational Assessment, Department of Education, 23 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333, 1-207-624-6774.

